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LETTER DATED 5 JANUARY 2000 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On 6 August 1990 sweeping sanctions were imposed on Iraq under Security Council resolution 661 (1990). These sanctions, inter alia, prohibited Iraq from exporting goods of any kind and froze its overseas assets, and Iraq was not permitted to obtain funds for the purchase of food and medicine, let alone for the payment of its contributions to the international organizations of which it is a member.

In view of Iraq's inability to pay its contributions in hard currency, given that it does not have the necessary financial resources owing to the comprehensive embargo being maintained against it, the contributions due from it to the budget of the United Nations came to exceed the amount stipulated in Article 19 of the Charter and Iraq was deprived of its right to vote in the General Assembly. The arrears in Iraq's contributions to the budgets of many other international organizations have also mounted, and these organizations include the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). In connection with its contributions to the United Nations budget, Iraq has for some years been submitting requests to the Committee on Contributions for exemption from the provisions of Article 19 of the Charter until such time as the sanctions are lifted. Certain States members of the Committee on Contributions, however, have opposed these requests for political reasons. The most recent request Iraq submitted to the Committee on Contributions was that of 19 October 1998 (A/C.5/53/28), which was considered by the Committee at its special session held from 8 to 12 February 1999. In paragraph 64 of its report (A/53/11/Add.1), the Committee states as follows:

> "In addition, there was some discussion of whether the outstanding assessments of Iraq could be met from the sale of Iraqi oil, as was the case with the Compensation Commission and the oil-for-food programme. Some members felt that it would be worth exploring this possibility."

In accordance with this recommendation, on 9 June 1999 the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed a letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations requesting that consideration be given to the possibility of Iraq's arrears being paid from the revenues derived from Iraqi oil exported under the memorandum of understanding and the oil-for-food programme. In his

letter dated 28 June 1999, the Secretary-General replied that the matter was not within his purview but within that of the Security Council.

In view of the paramount importance that Iraq accords to the payment of the arrears due to the United Nations and to OPEC, we request the Security Council to consider this matter on an urgent basis and to approve the allocation of $24 million from the Iraq Account established pursuant to resolution 986 (1990) and the memorandum of understanding of 20 May 1996, and specifically the 53 per cent and 13 per cent accounts, for the payment of the arrears in Iraq's contributions to the budget of the United Nations ($10 million) and to the OPEC budget ($14 million).

(Signed) Saeed H. HASAN
Permanent Representative